The South 40

Corn growth indicates uneven rainfall here

By JAMES A. SMITH
Extension Agent

Rainfall has not fallen evenly over the county. Corn growth easily indicates moisture and there are differences.

One of the concerns some cattle owners have is the possibility of nitrate poisoning. Nitrate poisoning can occur when crops heavily fertilized with nitrogen are subjected to stress conditions. Usually the nitrate concentration is greater in the lower third of the stalk.

If chopped corn must be fed, dilute it with hay.

A nitrate test can be run at Virginia Tech--we'll need a quart of chopped forage. It will take 7 to 10 days to get sample results.

Bailing high nitrate corn does not diminish the nitrate level. Ensiling and complete fermentation (3 weeks) can reduce the nitrate level by 50 percent.

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A new farmers market is operating at Madison Heights near intersection Route 29 South and Route 130 West across from Food World Supermarket. Hours are 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Saturday and 12:30 to 5:00 P.M. Sunday.

If interested contact John L. Martin at 804-845-1811 for additional details.

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Results of two alfalfa variety tests have been reported. A three-year test 1980-82 at the Orange Station had four varieties with average yields over 4 tons per acre. They are cimarron, 4.27; Arc, 4.12; Pioneer 531, 4.06; and Saranac AR, 4.03.

At Blacksburg a two-year test had four varieties with yields in excess of 5.75 tons. They are: Vanguard, 6.04; Conestoga, 5.89; Liberty and Titan 5.76.

Maintaining proper pH, controlling weeds and insects plus adequate fertilization are essential to top performance.

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If you are prepared, we believe that the no-till method of seeding alfalfa holds a lot of promise. One of the important things to remember--there are no short-cuts. Obviously there are no guarantees, but following the logical steps is important.

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Soil tests should have been done and lime applied. If there are hard to kill weeds like dock, horse nettle, etc. use Banvel and delay seeding until spring. All cover must be dead.

Plan to apply 10 pounds 10G or 7 pounds 15G Furadan per acre with the seed.

A seeding of 15 pounds per acre of alfalfa is adequate.

Reseed alfalfa to fields that have been out of alfalfa for at least two years. There's plenty of research to show that alfalfa following alfalfa does not perform well. Follow alfalfa with corn and small grain before re-establishing alfalfa.

The same process can be used for establishing orchardgrass-red clover or fescue- clover.

This no-till method can save dollars and reduce soil loss.

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For sometime the most popular method for determining when corn is physiologically mature(maximum dry weight accumulated in the grain) has been observing the formation of a black layer of cells at the base of the kernels. Black layer formation is a good indicator of maturity, but it cannot be used to predict when maturity will occur.

Some work at the University of Minnesota has shown that the "milk line" is a good indicator of approaching maturity. The "milk line" can be seen when an ear of corn is broken in half.

Kernels on the tip portion of the ear will have smooth sides exposed. As the ear approaches maturity, a "line" can be seen on the smooth side of the kernels. This line is called the milk line, or the starch layer, and it marks the boundary between the solid and liquid portions of the maturing endosperm.

A 3-year study with 5 varieties disclosed that when the milk line was half-way between the tip and base of the kernel, the moisture was approximately 40 percent.

You may want to try using this method for determining when to begin silage harvest this year.

Andre' Johns

Johns is week's camper

Are you an Apache, Cherokee, Comanche, or Shawnee camper? What sport are you playing in? What cabin are you in? -- These are just a few of the questions buzzing through the air at Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center. Four-H'ers from Buckingham, Cumberland, and Prince Edward counties just completed a week filled with developing new friendships, learning new ideas, and developing skills in selected classes.

For the week of July 18-22, a camper from Buckingham County was selected as "Camper of the Week." Andre' Johns was selected as "Camper of the Week" due to his attitude and cooperation throughout the week. Andre' has been in 4-H for two years and this was his first time at 4-H Camp. Andre' is the son of Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Johns of Dillwyn.

Another special group of people at camp are the Junior Leaders. These senior 4-H'ers act as leaders for the younger campers during the week. Louis Schalow, a Cumberland County 4-H'er, was selected "Junior Leader of the Week." This was Louis' first year as a Junior Leader. He also helped with the advanced swimming class. Louis has been in 4-H for seven years.

ASCS Today

Support info released

By TOM CONRAD

USDA Announces 1983 Flue-Cured Tobacco Price Support Level, Grade Support Rates - The 1983 crop of flue-cured tobacco will be supported at $1.699 per pound, the same as the 1982 support level.

This support level is required by an amendment to the Agricultural Act of 1949 which provides that 1983 price support for all kinds of tobacco for which quotas were not disapproved shall be supported at the 1982 price support levels.

This legislation will help ensure successful operation of the tobacco program at no net cost to the taxpayer.

As in the past, loans are unavailable on tobacco graded P5L, P5F, P5G, N1L, N1XL, N1Xo, N1PO, No-G, N2 (second quality nondescript), W (doubtful Keeping order), U (unsound), or scrap. Marketings of these low grades will be charged against the quotas of the farms on which they were produced.

Loan rates will be discounted 10 percent for any grade of supported primings which contain more dirt or sand than normal. Tobacco containing excessive sand or dirt will be graded NO-G, No grade.

The schedule of grade loan rates includes nine new grades and deletes 10 grades to more closely describe marketings.

Grade loan rates range from $1.13 to $2.21 per pound for various grades of eligible 1983-crop flue-cured tobacco; from these rates an amount of one cent per pound may be deducted to help defray the association's overhead costs.

Loan rates for most grades are the same as the 1982 rate. However, minor adjustments were made for a few grades to reflect the overall grade distribution and the addition and deletion of certain grades.

We have support schedules available at the ASCS office for anyone interested.

Redesignation of Flue Tobacco - This week is the first redesignation period for the 1983 crop of flue tobacco. Come by the ASCS office if you wish to redesignate.

Booking Fire-Cured Tobacco - Fire-cured tobacco producers are reminded that they can now book floor space by coming to the ASCS office. By booking now, you are guaranteed at least 60% of the crop can be sold before Christmas.

Foreign Investor - Foreign investors are required by law to report to the ASCS office within 90 days of any transfer of farmland property. Failure to report the transaction will result in a penalty being assessed.

Curing and sales practices

Use care with tobacco

J. A. Smith, Extension Agent, is urging local tobacco growers to be "very particular" about their curing and sales practices "to help insure that quality will be second to none."

The committee is coordinating a local effort that is part of a five-state campaign to improve the quality of this country's flue-cured leaf and strengthen its position in the marketplace, both domestic and foreign.

"For starters," Smith suggested, "uniform loading of racks and boxes in preparation for curing will reduce scalding, sweating and non-uniform cures. Also, since excessively high temperatures increase the chance of having red color, temperatures in excess of 160 degrees F. should be avoided."

When it comes to preparing leaf for sale, Smith said it is a good idea to remove any tobacco which is different from the majority, such as oxidized, scalded, green, red or black. "In other words, a uniform sheet of tobacco will be to the advantage of the grower."

Other tips suggested by Smith include: Remove all foreign matter from tobacco before offering it for sale, offer for sale only tobacco which has proper moisture content, do not offer for sale any nested piles of tobacco, and make sure that each pile of tobacco is uniform from top to bottom and from side to side.

Smith emphasized that leaf that is not acceptable in the market adds to Stabilization stocks and results in higher assessment rates for the no-net-cost tobacco program.

"By following good production, harvesting, and sales practices," Smith said, "growers can not only benefit in the short run by putting more money in their pockets, but also in the long run by assuring dependable domestic and foreign markets for their tobacco."

Snoddy elected to state bar governing council

J. Robert Snoddy, III, 35, of Dillwyn was recently elected by fellow lawyers in the 10th Judicial Circuit to a seat on the 56-member governing Council of the Virginia State Bar.

The Virginia State Bar is the administrative arm of the Virginia Supreme Court responsible for regulating the practice of law in the state and to which all practicing lawyers in Virginia must belong. The State Bar currently has about 17,300 members.

Snoddy was graduated from the University of Virginia with a BA degree in 1969 and from the university's law school in 1973. He has been active in professional associations, serving as secretary from 1975-77 and then as president from 1977-78 of the old Fifth Judicial Circuit Bar Association, and as vice-president from 1981-82 of the 10th Judicial Circuit Bar Association.

Admitted to the bar in 1973, he is the son of 10th Judicial Circuit Court Judge John R. Snoddy, Jr., who served on the Virginia State Bar Council during the early 1970s.

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